

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A data processing system of organizing, retrieving, and displaying data within a computer system to enable repeated viewing of different, user-selected subsets of elements, comprising:

a. a database and associated software for storing, organizing, and retrieving data about elements and their attributes;

b. a display for displaying a visual representation of selected subset elements for comparison, with:

1. each of the different, user-selected subsets given its own symbol, text, or common image format; and

2. each element's symbol, text, or image given a slot on the display; this slot may be:

i. designated by x, y, and z locations representing its real or symbolic relationship to other elements; or

ii. within a grid; and

c. a control apparatus for showing and hiding subsets on the visual representation which include: ~~1. display control panel(s) with graphic and text list selectors that, in response to user events or automatic updating systems, call to the database to determine subset elements to be added and subtracted from the visual representation;~~

~~2. alternatives to scroll bars which enable graphic, text, and text list selectors to be displayed in discrete, layered blocks, any one of which may be called forward by clicking, or otherwise signaling, on a segmented bar, arrowhead, or other symbol.~~

2. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 1 wherein said elements relate to an interactive two-dimensional, three-dimensional, or four-dimensional map or diagram of a place, topic, or thing.

3. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 1 wherein said selected elements comprise information forming a computer or online alternative to reference documents, including such as ~~atlases, encyclopedias, text books, natural history guides, travel guidebook listings, yellow pages directories, product catalogues, machine manuals, and land-use planning reports.~~

4. (Original) The system of claim 1 wherein said selected elements comprise information forming a computer or online specialty store where consumers can ask to see and compare all the available offerings for a particular category of product from one or a multitude of manufacturers and distributors.

5. (Currently Amended) In combination in a program-controlled data-processing system for controlling an infrastructure for presenting a collection of user selected information elements to facilitate translation of complex topical data to an enhanced display format, comprising:

- a. ~~Display~~ display control panels for receiving user commands and implementing a selective layering of data in the form of graphics, text, and/or images onto a base presentation wherein said control panel includes control icons and or text lists for manipulating the content of said selective layers in accord with user defined objectives;

b. ~~Database~~ a database comprising one or more data elements for use in providing the substance to said layered data wherein said data elements are located in an addressable memory in said database;

c. ~~Central~~ a central display controller in communication with said database and said control panel for interpreting commands received by said control panel and directing the placement of said data elements in accordance with a pre-programmed hierarchy; and

d. ~~Display~~ said display, interconnected to said central display controller for receiving image data including a base image and one or more selected layers for visual perception by said user.

6. (Original) The system of claim 5 wherein database further comprises database elements for supporting slotted map data for incorporation into said image data on said display.

7. (Original) The system of claim 5 wherein said display is a two-dimensional matrix of pixel elements characterizing said data elements.

8. (Currently Amended) In combination in a display management system for displaying complex data elements ~~relating to subjects wherein said data elements include three dimensional graphics and/or images~~ with said system comprising:

a. a first database having a plurality of data elements on a subject and its graphic information, said elements are stored in volatile memory and said first database capable of being refreshed with current data from a second database;

b. A a display processor characterized by a controlling program that provides one or more users with control icons on said display for selectively recalling collections of data; ~~said icons further arranged in hideable panels;~~

c. ~~Communication~~ a communication means for linking said first database with said second database to provide for refreshed data elements therefrom; and

d. ~~Display~~ a display for providing a multi-dimensional presentation of selected data element layers in accordance with user commands and said program controlling logic.

9. (Original) The system of claim 8 wherein said communication means is a public access network.

10. (Original) The system of claim 8 wherein said control icons are further characterized by descriptive text that is selectively displayed to enhance navigation and information display.